

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 ARA-10 EUR-08 IO-06 ISO-00 SS-15

NSCE-00 AID-01 SSO-00 /048 W

-----005898 291723Z /53

O 291851Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8512

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 16486

NAIROBI FOR CODEL DIGGS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, MOPS, PINT, EFIN, CG, AO, BE

SUBJECT: CODEL DIGGS: MEETING AT BELGIAN FOREIGN
MINISTRY ON ZAIRE AND ANGOLA

REF: A) STATE 213802, B) BRUSSELS 16278

1. SUMMARY - CONGRESSMAN DIGGS, COMMITTEE STAFF
DIRECTOR WARD AND EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER MET
AUGUST 25 WITH BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHEF DE
CABINET ALFRED CAHEN AND HAD A 45 MINUTE CONVERSATION
ON AFRICA, FOCUSING ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ZAIRE
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AND ANGOLA. END SUMMARY

2. CAHEN LAUNCHED INTO HIS USUAL BRIEFING ON ZAIRE,
STRESSING FAMILIAR THEMES LIKE THE LACK OF AN
ALTERNATIVE TO MOBUTU AND THAT MOBUTU, WITH HIS
CONSUMMATE POLITICAL FEEL, MAINTAINS A FRAGILE
POLITICAL BALANCE (E.G. EVEN SHABA I AND II DID NOT

DESTABILIZE ZAIRE) WITHOUT WHICH ZAIRE WOULD DESCEND INTO TRIBAL WARFARE AND CHAOS.

3. CAHEN EMPHASIZED TO CONGRESSMAN DIGGS THAT MOBUTU KNOWS WHAT HE HAS TO DO TO REFORM HIS COUNTRY. HE SAID THAT THE PARIS FIVE MUST MAINTAIN THE PRESSURE ON MOBUTU TO FOLLOW THROUGH, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME MOVING WITH THE UPMOST TACT SO AS NOT TO RUFFLE THE FEATHERS OF THE YOUNG, EDUCATED ELITE AND TRIGGER A REACTION OF NATIONAL PRIDE. CAHEN CHARACTERIZED THIS TACT AND RESPECT FOR ZAIRIAN SOVEREIGNTY AS A "PERMANENT DIALOGUE", WITHOUT WHICH THE ZAIRIANS WILL VIEW THE WESTERN EFFORT AS NEO-COLONIALISM AND TURN AGAINST BOTH THE MOBUTU REGIME AND THE WESTERN NATIONS SEEKING TO HELP ZAIRE.

4. CAHEN SAID THAT MOBUTU IS AWARE OF THE IRONY THAT IF ECONOMIC, ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLITICAL REFORMS ARE IMPLEMENTED AND WORK "REASONABLY WELL," THEN THERE WILL BE CREATED A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO MOBUTU WHICH DOES NOT NOW EXIST, AND HE COULD THEN BE REPLACED.

5. ANGOLA. IN RESPONSE TO CONGRESSMAN'S DIGGS' QUESTION ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CURRENT ANGOLAN-ZAIRIAN RAPPROCHEMENT, CAHEN SAID THAT DEVELOPMENTS ARE POSITIVE EVEN IF THEY DO NOT LAST FOR A LONG
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TIME. HE SAID THAT ANGOLA AND ZAIRE WERE HURTING EACH OTHER AND THAT BOTH NATIONS NOW NEED A PAUSE. THEREFORE, AFTER AN APPLICATION OF WESTERN PRESSURE, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS CAME TO AN UNDERSTANDING MUCH FASTER THAN MANY HAD ANTICIPATED. CAHEN SAID THAT BOTH ANGOLA AND ZAIRE HAD ALREADY BENEFITED FROM THE AGREEMENT, WITNESS MOBUTU'S REDUCED SUPPORT OF UNITA AND NETO'S MOVING OF THE EX-KATANGA GENDARMES AWAY FROM THE BORDER. HE SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF THE BENGUELA RAILROAD WAS STILL UNCLEAR.

6. CAHEN TOLD CONGRESSMAN DIGGS THAT THE WEST'S NOT WISHING TO GET INVOLVED IN WARFARE IN CENTRAL AFRICA WAS THE MAIN REASON THAT THE PARIS FIVE HAD PUSHED MOBUTU TOWARDS NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA. HE STRESSED THAT THE KEY UNKNOWN WAS WHETHER THE USSR AND CUBA ALSO WANTED TO AVOID CONFLICT IN CENTRAL AFRICA OR WHETHER THIS IS JUST A PAUSE BEFORE THEY START SOMETHING ELSE. HE SAID ANGOLANS WANT THE NAMIBIAN SOLUTION TO WORK OUT, AS A FAILURE WOULD BRING MORE TURMOIL AND CIVIL WAR TO ANGOLA. CAHEN SAID THAT THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT HAS SENT MANY

SIGNALS THAT THEY WANT IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE WEST; HE CITED AS EXAMPLES THE MCHENTRY-JUNIOR MISSION TO LUANDA, EC COMMISSIONER CHEYSSON'S RECENT ANGOLAN TRIP, AND THE MANY CONTACTS THAT THE BELGIANS HAVE HAD IN BRUSSELS WITH ANGOLAN AMBASSADOR LUIS JOSE DE ALMEIDA.

6. FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET'S SEPTEMBER 6-9 TRIP TO ANGOLA. CAHEN TOLD DIGGS THAT HE WOULD BE GOING

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ALONG ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S TRIP TO LUANDA AND WOULD SHARE HIS IMPRESSIONS WITH CONGRESSMAN DIGGS IN WASHINGTON WHEN THEY HOPEFULLY WILL MEET IN EARLY OCTOBER. CAHEN SAID THE SIMONET TRIP TO ANGOLA FITS INTO FRAMEWORK OF BELGIAN DESIRE TO HAVE A GENERAL AFRICAN POLICY AND NOT JUST A POLICY BASED ON BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH FORMER COLONIES. HE STRESSED THAT ALTHOUGH BELGIUM WILL NOT PLAY A "MEDIATOR'S ROLE" BETWEEN ANGOLA AND ZAIRE (THAT WOULD BE "NEO-

COLONIALIST"), NEVERTHELESS BELGIUM WOULD BE PREPARED
TO PLAY A USEFUL ROLE IN KEEPING THE NORMALIZATION
PROCESS BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA ON THE TRACKS. HE
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EMPHASIZED TO DIGGS THAT SIMONET WOULD NOT BE PLAYING
A SEPARATE ROLE IN THIS ENDEAVOR, BUT WOULD BE CARRYING
ON THE POLICY OF THE PARIS FIVE IN PROMOTING IMPROVEMENT
OF RELATIONS BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA. HE SAID
THAT SIMONET WOULD SHARE HIS IMPRESSIONS WITH SECRETARY
VANCE AND AMBASSADOR YOUNG AT THE UNGA. CONGRESSMAN
DIGGS SAID THIS MUTUAL SHARING OF IMPRESSIONS ON
ANGOLA SHOULD BE USEFUL FOR BOTH COUNTRIES.

7. FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DEPUTY CHEF DE CABINET ANDRE
ONKELINX COVERED MUCH OF THE SAME GROUND ON SIMONET'S
UPCOMING ANGOLA TRIP WITH US AUGUST 28, SAYING THAT
SIMONET WOULD APPRECIATE ANY BACKGROUND AND GUIDANCE
THAT WE WISHED TO PROVIDE HIM PRIOR TO THE SEPTEMBER 6
DEPARTURE. STRESSING AGAIN THAT THE SIMONET TRIP
SHOULD BEST BE VIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PARIS FIV
FOLLOW-UP, ONKELINX SAID BELGIANS WOULD ESPECIALLY
APPRECIATE RECEIVING THE LATEST U.S. VIEWS ON THE
QUESTIONS OF REFUGEES, THE BORDER VERIFICATION
COMMISSION, THE Benguela Railroad, AND HOW THE WEST
MIGHT ASSIST IN HELPING COPE WITH THESE PROBLEMS.
ONKELINX SAID THAT THE BELGIANS WERE ALSO CONSULTING
ON ANGOLA WITH THE GERMANS AND THE FRENCH PRIOR TO
SIMONET'S DEPARTURE (CAHEN IS TO SEE ELYSEE ADVISOR
JOURNIAC IN PARIS ON SEPT. 1).

8. ACTION REQUESTED: ANY INFORMATION OR VIEWS THAT
THE DEPARTMENT WISHES TO PROVIDE TO BELGIANS PRIOR
TO SIMONET'S ANGOLAN TRIP SHOULD REACH US PRIOR TO
COB SEPTEMBER 6. CHAMBERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CODELS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BRUSSE16486
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780352-0912
Format: TEL
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780810/aaaaaibv.tel
Line Count: 209
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 213802, 78 BRUSSELS 16278
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1539159
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL DIGGS: MEETING AT BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ON ZAIRE AND ANGOLA
TAGS: OREP, MOPS, PINT, EFIN, CG, AO, BE, XA, (DIGGS, CHARLES C JR), (CAHEN, ALFRED)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f6b78457-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014